

essential iris atrophy (iridocorneal syndrome) should indicate absence of the heart or a substantial part of the brain. For one iridologist, an arcus senilis is a ring of sodium deposited in the iris, for another it is an indicator of anemia or enervation. The owner of a blue iris is blessed with a promise of longevity. Look carefully, though! If the blue is faintly coated with white, the blessing is revoked because the whitish layer represents an accumulation of harmful acids. Let the owner of a vertically oval pupil prepare to make peace with his Maker for it is a sign of imminent death. If both pupils are so shaped, do not bother for there is not enough time.

A distinct flavor of the medically medieval pervades standard treatises on iridology. One is likely to encounter such curious entities as uterine catarrh, prolapse of the transverse colon, abdominal plethora and a lymphatic-rheumatic-tubercular constitution.

Nutritional balance emerges as the handmaiden of iridology. There are iris drug spots and cramp rings to be erased, toxins to be flushed, overactive and underactive glands to be set right. Nutritional

correction is the primary tool and, not surprisingly, iridologists often have the appropriate food supplements available for sale to achieve these worthy ends. Periodic examinations of the iris are required to determine if and when a state of true health has been restored.

Iridologists have been quick to grant that theirs is not the only technique available for the diagnosis of disease. All of them have argued that it is as valid as most and has on occasion proved superior to some. The truth of this contention was tested in a recent study, which has emerged as the first genuine piece of scientific research on this subject. Three ophthalmologists and three iridologists viewed iris photographs of 143 patients. Of these patients, 48 had kidney disease and 95 did not. No other clinical information was made available to the viewers. The iridologists demonstrated no statistically significant ability to identify the victims of kidney disease.

JERRY DONIN, MD

#### REFERENCES

- Simon A, Worthen DM, Mitas JA 2d: An evaluation of iridology. *JAMA* 242:1385-1389, Sep 28, 1979  
Kriege T: *Fundamental Basis of Iridiagnosis*. Essex, LN Fowler, 1977

### ADVISORY PANEL TO THE SECTION ON OPHTHALMOLOGY

JERRY DONIN, MD  
*Advisory Panel Chairman*  
*CMA Scientific Board Representative*  
*Pomona*

ALAN SCOTT, MD  
*CMA Section Chairman*  
*San Francisco*

NICHOLAS VINCENT, MD  
*CMA Section Secretary*  
*Santa Barbara*

ROBERT STONE, MD  
*CMA Section Assistant Secretary*  
*San Francisco*

JAMES MCNEILL, MD  
*Loma Linda University*

A. RALPH ROSENTHAL, MD  
*Stanford University*

JOHN KELTNER, MD  
*University of California, Davis*

IRVING LEOPOLD, MD  
*University of California, Irvine*

BRADLEY R. STRAATSMA, MD  
*University of California, Los Angeles*

DAVID SEVEL, MD  
*University of California, San Diego*

STEVEN KRAMER, MD  
*University of California, San Francisco*

STEPHEN J. RYAN, JR, MD  
*Section Editor*  
*University of Southern California*  
*Los Angeles*

BRUCE SPIVEY, MD  
*San Francisco*

DANIEL G. VAUGHAN, MD  
*San Jose*

GEORGE K. KAMBARA, MD  
*Los Angeles*